SPARTACIST

Supplement
1 July 2026

NATO on the Offensive

How to Build the Resistance?

Globe Photos

July's NATO summit is being convened in an increasingly dangerous and unstable world. On the agenda: militarizing NATO countries, consolidating them behind U.S. aggression and making the population pay the cost for bringing the American jackboot down on the planet.

Trump's re-election to the White House marked a turning point in history. The old world order, where the U.S. "peacefully" exploited the world at the head of an alliance of all the imperialist powers, is gone. With its domestic industry eroded and its control over the world weakened, the U.S. is ripping off the fig leaf of liberal ideals and turning to naked force to defend its global hegemony at the expense of everyone else. From genocide in Gaza to the destruction of Lebanon, bombing Iran, subjugating Venezuela and starving Cuba, no cost in human suffering is too much for the U.S. and its Zionist proxy.

The other Western imperialist powers, including Germany, France and the UK, have paid a high price for increased military expenses and the economic disruption caused by U.S. military interventions. But whatever high-sounding declarations of opposition they made, these governments quickly fell into line, shelling out for the U.S. proxy war in Ukraine, increasing arms shipments to Zionist Israel and allowing their airspace and military installations to be used to attack Iran. As weak junior partners, they depend on U.S. hard power to protect their interests on the world stage so they capitulate to its demands.

In the oppressed NATO countries of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, the economic turmoil caused by the U.S. offensive is hitting hard. But the rulers of these countries are supporting NATO militarization. They are looking to the imperialists to support their privileged position as they shift the economic burden onto the oppressed, attacking social services and workers' rights, increasing the dependence of their countries on the imperialists and turning their countries into NATO military bases.

It is the workers of the world who have the potential to push back against the U.S. onslaught and open the road to peace and social progress. But where is the workers movement in this crisis? It has not been a factor.

For decades, the imperialists justified their oppression of the planet under liberal ideas of human rights, development and open borders, while they ground down the masses. Instead of opposing the liberal onslaught, the union leaders and socialist left echoed the liberals and associated themselves with the status quo and imperialist institutions like the EU, the UN and the International Labour Organization. Today the unions are worn down, and the socialist left is discredited, while the working people are increasingly looking to right-wing forces as the only serious opposition to the social order.

For a working-class opposition to NATO!

The socialist left must seriously rethink its course in order to begin to turn this situation around. As NATO rearms and the world becomes more dangerous and unstable, it is urgent for socialists to come together to

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build a proletarian, anti-imperialist united front. The anti-NATO events taking place this summer are a welcome opportunity to work together and debate the way forward. To that end, we offer the following proposal, as a contribution to strengthen the anti-NATO struggle:

1. ***The main enemy is the U.S.!*** The U.S. is the bulwark of the world imperialist system and the main cause of chaos and misery around the world. The national elites in NATO countries are relying on U.S. power to defend their interests against the masses. In contrast, for the working class NATO spells only disaster: even the most basic demands to improve the masses' daily lives require opposition to the U.S.'s economic and military offensive. It is this struggle, for a common interest against a common enemy, that can unite the working people of oppressed and oppressor nations alike.

2. ***Defend NATO's targets!*** Palestine, Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, China: these countries are in the crosshairs of the Trump administration. The more successful the U.S. is against these countries, the stronger the position it will be in to go after everyone else. However, the governments of these countries have undermined their defense by subordinating the struggle against imperialism to their own national and sectoral interests. Socialists need to chart an independent course. By rallying forces around a class-struggle strategy for defense, we can show in practice that the methods of international socialism are the best way to fight against imperialism, not the sectarian methods of the government in Iran or the nationalist strategy of the Communist Party of China.

3. ***No to pacifism!*** The Trump administration is fighting to maintain the global power of the U.S. empire. On this fundamental question, it will not be stopped by moral appeals to peace, UN resolutions, human rights or international law. It is not NATO that is disarmed by pacifism and moral appeals, but the working masses who are misled to believe that there is some other solution besides taking matters into their own hands and disarming their oppressors.

4. ***Go to the working class!*** To overcome the isolation of the socialist left and bridge the gulf between us and the working class requires a sharp break with the failed policies of yesterday. To undercut the rising right, it is necessary to show that socialists, not nationalists or populists, are the only serious opponents of the decaying imperialist order. A political struggle must be waged against the supporters of imperialism within the workers movement. This includes the liberals in the oppressor countries and the modernizing nationalists in the oppressed countries who look to the imperialists for support, as well as the union bureaucrats who tail them both. Only by addressing the obstacles holding the workers back—centrally ties of their own leadership to the imperialists—is it possible to build a strong movement against militarism and war. ■

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SEPTEMBER 2023
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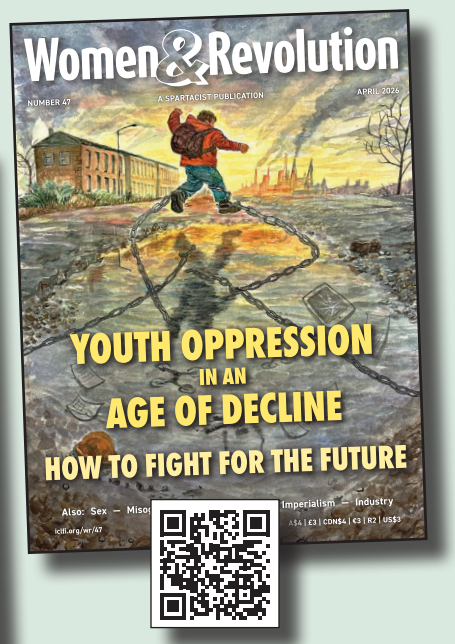

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